



The Sparkling Tour 2005 stars shine on one last time during an awards dinner at the Divi Phoenix

The cheering crowd of thousands have gone home, the fireworks and confetti long cleaned up, but the glamour and excitement that typified the Sparkling Tour 2005 was still very evident as individuals were honored and prizes awarded during an informal gala at the Divi Phoenix Sunset Garden on Saturday Night. The “elegantly informal” social evening was held for all those that had contributed to the success of the “American Idol” style series that was broadcast over Aruba’s National Television Network, TeleAruba, during the months of July and August. The finals on August 14 was witness to fabulous performances with a show stopping turn by Roberto Zeeuw that won him the Grand Prize of \$20,000.

Aside from gifts for all the winners from each of the series’ sponsors there were beautiful star statuettes for each of the judges, Alydia Wever, Chayo Tromp, Chucho Hoek, Fernando Mansur, Janice Kock, Kurt Labadie, and Maybeline Arends. Also honored for their participation were noted musicians Hildward Croes on keyboard and guitarist Antonio Bello who provided the orchestration for many of the individual performers. Ronchi de Cuba and his design house Trash received mention for many of the beautiful outfits plus the hair and makeup service provided to the young aspiring stars.

The last five finalist received armloads of gifts from the various sponsors including gift baskets from Consales, Cell phones from SETAR, NV, parent company to TeleAruba, the chance to win a new car from Drive Motors, and gift certificates from Wendy’s amongst an assortment of goodies. In addition, third place winner Michel Almary took home a brand new Acer laptop computer and second place winners, the singing trio of Rebecca, Viona and Rooje, each received round trip plane tickets to Europe, compliments of KLM. For the final award, TeleAruba Director Robert Kelly handed an ATM card to Roberto Zeeuw, which will give him access to his personal account that now has a balance of 35,000 Aruban Florins. When asked what he would do with his prize he stated, “I will give it to my mother; I don’t need anything for myself, so I am going to use it to help my family.” It would appear he is not only enormously talented, but Roberto is also selfless, and a good son.

All the talented young performers from the tour gave a special souvenir to young Hannah and Abigal, island visitors here from England with their family. Attending the gala dinner with Shanice, their baby sitter and one of the ten finalists of the Sparkling Tour, they had brought along plain white tee shirts with the request that the performers autograph them, which they did gladly.

This was the final, exciting end to the Sparkling Tour 2005, the first event of its kind to be held in Aruba, and a huge success. Not only did it provide several evenings of exciting entertainment, it gave an opportunity to many of the island’s extremely talented young people to display their talent, and perhaps an opening to a musical career. Congratulations to all the winners, it looks like a new and thrilling annual event has been established with the Sparkling Tour, the search for Aruba’s New Youth Star.